

H. R. 386.

[No Report.]

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SEPTEMBER 7, 1850.

Read twice and committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. McLANE, from the Committee on Commerce, reported the following bill :

A BILL

To amend an act entitled "An act to provide for the better security of the lives of passengers on board of vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam."

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Represen-*
2 *tatives of the United States of America in Congress*
3 *assembled, That no license, under the provisions of the*
4 *act to which this is an amendment, shall be granted, or*
5 *other papers issued by any collector, to any vessel pro-*
6 *pelled in whole or in part by steam, until he shall have*
7 *satisfactory evidence that all the provisions of this act have*
8 *been fully complied with ; and if any such vessel shall be*
9 *navigated, with freight or passengers on board, without*
10 *complying with the terms of this act, the owners thereof,*

11 and the vessel itself shall be subject to the penalties con-
12 tained in the second section of the act to which this is an
13 amendment.

1 SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That it shall be the
2 duty both of the inspectors of the hulls of steamers, and
3 the inspectors of boilers, to examine and see that suitable
4 and safe provisions are made throughout such vessels, to
5 guard against loss or danger from fire, and no license on
6 any application shall be granted, if any combustible mate-
7 rial liable to take fire from heated iron, or any other heat
8 generated on board of such vessels in and about the boilers,
9 pipes, or machinery, shall be placed at less than eighteen
10 inches distant from the surface of such heated metal or
11 other substance likely to cause ignition, unless a column
12 of air or water intervenes between such heated surface
13 and any wood or other combustible material so exposed,
14 sufficient, at all times, and under all circumstances, to pre-
15 vent ignition ; and further, when wood is so exposed to ig-
16 nition, as an additional preventive, it shall be shielded by
17 some incombustible material in such manner as to leave
18 the air to circulate freely between such material and the
19 wood.

1 SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That every ves-
2 sel so propelled by steam, and carrying passengers, shall
3 have not less than three forcing pumps of at least six inch

4 chamber, two to be worked by hand, and one by steam, if
5 steam can be employed, otherwise by hand; one whereof
6 shall be placed near the stern, one near the stem, and one
7 amidship; each having a suitable, well-fitted hose, of at
8 least two-thirds the length of the vessel, kept at all times in
9 perfect order and ready for immediate use; each of which
10 pumps shall also be supplied with water by a pipe connected
11 therewith, and passing through the side of the vessel, so
12 low as to be at all times in the water when she is afloat:
13 *Provided, however,* That any steamer which shall not at any
14 time carry more than fifty passengers, shall not be required
15 to have more than two such pumps, one of which shall be
16 prepared to work by steam as aforesaid.

1 SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That every such
2 vessel, carrying passengers, shall have at least two boats
3 supplied with oars, in good condition at all times for ser-
4 vice, one of which boats shall be a metallic life-boat, fire
5 proof, of approved model, not less than twenty-five feet
6 long, six feet six inches wide, and two feet deep, and in all
7 respects a good, substantial, safe, sea-boat, capable of sus-
8 taining, inside and outside, fifty persons, and having a can-
9 vas fender around the gunwale, filled with cork, of not less
10 than six inches in diameter, with life-lines attached thereto
11 at suitable distances. And every such vessel carrying
12 more than fifty passengers, shall also have a similar boat

13 for every additional fifty passengers, or, instead thereof,
4 for every such number, a good, substantial, safe, wooden
5 life-boat, of suitable model, fitted with life-lines in manner
16 aforesaid, and capable of sustaining, inside and outside,
17 that number of persons: *Provided, however,* That ferry
18 and tow boats shall be exempt from the obligation to carry
19 the life-boats herein provided for; and the inspectors are
20 hereby authorized to grant a like dispensation to small
21 steamers of light draft, navigating small or shallow rivers:
22 *Provided,* They shall be fully satisfied that such steamers
23 have other provisions for the preservation of life in case of
24 fire, which are amply sufficient for that purpose.

1 SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That every such
2 vessel, carrying passengers, shall also be provided with a
3 good life-preserver, made of cork, double tin, or copper,
4 for each and every person on board, which life-preservers
5 shall always be distributed and kept in readiness in the
6 berths and state rooms of night boats for the benefit of
7 passengers occupying the same, and also in the most con-
8 spicuous and suitable places for all others; and shall also
9 keep after the rate of eight fire buckets and three axes for
10 every hundred tons measurement of the vessel, which shall
11 always be kept distributed in a suitable manner and in good
12 order, ready to be used in case of fire.

1 SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That no curtains
2 made of cotton, or of any material alike combustible, shall
3 be suspended or used in any such vessel carrying passen-
4 gers ; nor shall powder, oil, turpentine, or any combustible
5 fluid, be carried on any such vessels as freight ; and where
6 kept on board as stores, they must be placed in metallic
7 vessels.

1 SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,* That it shall be
2 the duty of each collector, to cause any and all such ves-
3 sels arriving in or departing from his district, to be exam-
4 ined at any and all times without notice, when he may deem
5 such examinations necessary or expedient to secure the
6 faithful execution of this act ; and the officer so examining
7 shall report any omission to comply with the terms herein
8 prescribed ; and shall in such report state the particulars
9 of the deficiency, and thereupon the collector shall com-
10 municate the same to the district attorney, who shall pro-
11 ceed against the delinquent or delinquents according to the
12 provisions of this and the act to which it is an amendment.

1 SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted,* That every such
2 vessel, carrying passengers, having its boiler under the
3 main deck, or in the hold of the vessel, shall have the en-
4 tire spaces occupied by the furnaces, surrounded by a con-
5 tinuous sheet of water of at least two inches in thickness,
6 except the necessary spaces for fire doors and air holes.

1 SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted,* That all boilers
2 to which the heat is applied to the external surface, shall be
3 tested with a hydraulic press every three months; and all
4 boilers to which the heat is applied to the internal surface,
5 shall be tested every six months during which such boilers
6 may be in actual service; the safety valve of all such boilers
7 as are tested shall be loaded at sixty-five-one-hundredths
8 of the strain applied by the press, and any engineer, cap-
9 tain, or owner allowing a greater pressure to be used than
10 is fixed by the inspector, shall be deemed guilty of a mis-
11 demeanor, and any loss of life growing out of the use of
12 such excess of steam, shall be deemed manslaughter; and
13 any inspector, who shall inspect a steamer which shall take
14 fire, explode, or sink from decay, by which loss of life oc-
15 cur, shall be subject to a fine of three hundred dollars, un-
16 less said inspector shall prove that such loss was the result
17 of neglect on the part of the crew of said^r steamer: *Pro-*
18 *vided,* Such liability shall not extend beyond the term for
19 which said inspector gave such steamer a certificate; and
20 instead of the inspectors now provided by law, there shall be
21 one inspector of hulls, and two inspectors of boilers and
22 machinery, who shall inspect all such vessels. The inspec-
23 tors of machinery shall provide themselves with a suitable
24 press for testing the strength of boilers, and shall see that
25 all steamers to which this law applies are equipped and fitted

26 as herein provided. The inspector of hulls shall annually
27 inspect all steamers that have been in service three years
28 or more ; and the inspectors of boilers and machinery shall
29 receive from the collectors of the port where such steamers
30 are registered as he may have inspected, the sum of twen-
31 ty dollars per annum for each steamer so inspected, paya-
32 ble at the end of the year after such services shall have
33 been rendered. Inspectors of hulls shall receive ten dol-
34 lars per annum for the inspection of all such steamers as
35 have been in commission three years or more, and no col-
36 lector shall grant a license to any steamer until the master
37 or owner pay to said collector the sum required to be paid
38 for the inspection of such steamers during the succeeding
39 year.

1 SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted,* That if the mas-
2 ter of any vessel, propelled in whole or in part by steam,
3 owned in whole or in part by a citizen of the United States
4 of America, or by a citizen of any foreign country, and
5 navigating the waters of the United States, or sailing to or
6 from any port in the United States, shall take on board
7 such vessel a greater number of passengers than in the
8 following proportion to the space occupied by them and
9 appropriated for their use, and unoccupied by stores or
10 other goods not being the personal baggage of such pas-
11 sengers, that is to say, one passenger for every

12 clear superficial feet of deck, whether the same be for deck
13 or cabin passengers, every such master shall be deemed
14 guilty of a misdemeanor, and be liable to the penalty pro-
15 vided for in the first section of the act passed twenty-second
16 of February, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven,
17 entitled "An act to regulate the carriage of passengers in
18 merchant vessels.